

What is claimed is:

- 1        1. A method comprising:
  - 2            receiving, at a data processing system, a requirement from a prospective purchaser for a first
  - 3            chemical;
  - 4            comparing, in said data processing system, said requirement to analyses of batches of said
  - 5            first chemical that are available for purchase through said data processing system to identify a batch
  - 6            that satisfies said requirement; and
  - 7            outputting, from said data processing system, an indicium of said identified batch to said
  - 8            prospective purchaser.
  
- 1        2. The method of claim 1 wherein said analyses are stored in an inventory database in said
- 2        data processing system.
  
- 1        3. The method of claim 1 further comprising obtaining said analyses from a testing facility
- 2        that tests samples of said batches in accordance with a uniform standard that is established for said
- 3        first chemical.
  
- 1        4. The method of claim 1 further comprising:
  - 2            compiling statistics in said data processing system, said statistics comprising information
  - 3            about purchases of said first chemical and purchases of other chemicals facilitated by said data
  - 4            processing system; and
  - 5            outputting said statistics to a statistics subscriber.
  
- 1        5. The method of claim 1 further comprising storing said requirement in a requirements
- 2        database.

1       6. The method of claim 2 further comprising:  
2        updating said inventory database by obtaining further analyses of further batches of said first  
3        chemical, wherein said further batches are analyzed in accordance with a uniform standard  
4        established for said first chemical; and  
5        inputting said further analyses into said inventory database.

1       7. The method of claim 6 further comprising:  
2        updating said inventory database by obtaining analyses of batches of a second chemical,  
3        wherein said batches are analyzed in accordance with a uniform standard established for said second  
4        chemical; and  
5        inputting said analyses of batches of said second chemical into said inventory database.

1       8. The method of claim 1 wherein said identified batch of said first chemical  
2        is priced below a price at which said first chemical is normally sold.

1       9. A method comprising:  
2        establishing a uniform standard for a chemical, the uniform standard including a  
3        supplier-independent set of physical and chemical characteristics of said chemical;  
4        analyzing, according to said uniform standard, a first sample of a batch of said chemical from  
5        a first supplier and a second sample of a batch of said chemical from a second supplier; and  
6        inputting analyses of said first sample and analyses of said second sample into a data  
7        processing system.

1       10. The method of claim 9 further comprising storing said analyses of said first sample and  
2        said analyses of said second sample in an inventory database.

1       11. The method of claim 9 further comprising receiving, at said data processing system, a  
2        requirement from a prospective purchaser for said chemical.

1       **12.** The method of claim 11 further comprising comparing, in said data processing  
2       system, said requirement to said analyses of said first sample and said second sample.

1       **13.** The method of claim 12 further comprising determining, via said data processing system,  
2       if said analyses of said first sample and said second sample satisfy said requirement for said  
3       chemical.

1       **14.** A method comprising:  
2           outputting, from a data processing system, a uniform standard for a chemical, said  
3       uniform standard defined by a supplier-independent set of physical and chemical characteristics of  
4       said chemical; and  
5           receiving, at said data processing system, a requirement from a prospective purchaser for said  
6       chemical, said requirement comprising an allowable range of values for at least some of said physical  
7       and chemical characteristics that define said uniform standard.

1       **15.** The method of claim 14 further comprising storing said requirement in said data  
2       processing system.

1       **16.** The method of claim 14 further comprising comparing, via said data processing system,  
2       said requirement to analyses of batches of said chemical that are available for purchase through said  
3       data processing system.

1       **17.** The method of claim 16 further comprising outputting, from said data processing system,  
2       an indicium of a batch of said chemical that satisfies said requirement.

1       18. A method for selling a non-branded product, comprising:  
2       analyzing, according to a uniform standard, a sample of a batch of a chemical  
3       supplied by a first supplier;  
4           inputting analyses of said sample into a data processing system; and  
5           outputting, from said data processing system to a prospective purchaser, an indicium of said  
6       batch if said analyses satisfies a requirement for said chemical established by said prospective  
7       purchaser, wherein said indicium does not identify said batch by supplier, by brand name or other  
8       identifying designation.

1       19. The method of claim 18 further comprising offering said batch for sale at a price that is  
2       lower than an offering price of branded batches of said chemical of said first supplier.

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29 30 31 32 33 34 35 36 37 38 39 40 41 42 43 44 45 46 47 48 49 50 51 52 53 54 55 56 57 58 59 60 61 62 63 64 65 66 67 68 69 70 71 72 73 74 75 76 77 78 79 80 81 82 83 84 85 86 87 88 89 90 91 92 93 94 95 96 97 98 99 100